

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 03741 251748Z

ACTION OES-06

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 FEA-01 ACDA-07 CIAE-00

INR-07 IO-13 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-08 NRC-05

DODE-00 ERDA-05 SS-15 SP-02 /084 W

-----260113Z 111222 /73

R 251626Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1177

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 3741

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENGR, TECH, PARM, CO

SUBJECT: BILATERAL NUCLEAR AGREEMENT AND COLOMBIAN NUCLEAR
DEVELOPMENT

REF: STATE 065539

1. SUMMARY. IN SPITE OF US INABILITY TO RESPOND QUICKLY TO COLOMBIA'S REQUEST FOR FUEL FOR ITS SMALL REACTOR, THE GOC LAST MONTH AGREED TO EXTEND THE BILATERAL NUCLEAR SAFEGUARDS AGREEMENT. THE COLOMBIAN FUEL ELEMENT IS TEN YEARS OLD AND COULD EXPIRE AT ANY TIME, THUS BRINGING TO A HALT A NUMBER OF ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING SEVERAL OF REAL ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE TO COLOMBIA. ALTHOUGH THE COLOMBIAN NUCLEAR TEAM IS WELL-DISPOSED TO THE US, THE CONTINUATION OF THIS ATTITUDE WILL BE INFLUENCED BY THE DEGREE TO WHICH WE SUPPORT COLOMBIAN NEEDS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE COLOMBIAN NUCLEAR FUEL ELEMENT COULD EXPIRE AT ANY TIME, AS IT WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE AN EIGHT YEAR LIFE AND IS PRESENTLY TEN YEARS OLD. ITS EXPIRATION WILL BRING THE COLOMBIAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM TO A NEAR HALT UNTIL A NEW BILATERAL CAN BE NEGOTIATED AND NEW FUEL SUPPLIED. FOR THIS REASON, THE GOC BENT ITS LEGAL SCRUPLES TO THE LIMIT IN ORDER TO SATISFY THE U.S. IN THE RECENT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 03741 251748Z

NEGOTIATIONS ON NUCLEAR SAFEGUARDS. THE DIRECTOR OF THE COLOMBIAN NUCLEAR AFFAIRS INSTITUTE (IAN), DR. ERNESTO VILLARREAL, WAS PRACTICALLY NEGOTIATING ON THE U.S. SIDE SO THAT THE GOC WOULD SIGN A NOTE WHICH SATISFIED WASHINGTON AND IMPROVED COLOMBIA'S CHANCES FOR AN EARLY RENEGOTIATION. IN ORDER TO ENLIST DR. VILLARREAL'S STRONG SUPPORT THE EMBASSY INFORMED HIM (WITH WASHINGTON'S

CONCURRENCE) THAT WASHINGTON HAD SAID WE WOULD PUT COLOMBIA TOWARD THE HEAD OF THE LINE IN RENEGOTIATIONS PENDING WITH SEVERAL COUNTRIES.

3. PRESENTLY, THE IAN IS CONDUCTING A NUMBER OF ACTIVITIES DEPENDENT UPON THE REACTOR WHICH GO BEYOND THE LIMITED ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE COLOMBIAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM AND REACH INTO HIGH PRIORITY SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY. FOR EXAMPLE, THE INSTITUTE IS CONDUCTING DELAYED NEUTRON ACTIVATION ANALYSIS FOR URANIUM AND THORIUM ON 200 ORE SAMPLES A WEEK WITH THE FRENCH MIN ATOM URANIUM EXPLORATION ACTIVITY. BY JULY, ANOTHER 200 SAMPLES A WEEK WILL BE ANALYZED UNDER THE SPANISH EXPLORATION PROGRAM AND BY SEPTEMBER AN EQUAL NUMBER WILL BE ANALYZED IN THE SAPATOKA PROJECT. WESTINGHOUSE AND GENERAL ELECTRIC MAY ALSO BECOME INVOLVED IN URANIUM EXPLORATION IN COLOMBIA BY THE END OF 1977. THESE STUDIES GENERATE INCOME FOR IAN AND REDUCE THE EXPLORATION COSTS, OF WHICH COLOMBIA WILL EVENTUALLY PAY 51 PERCENT. WHEN THE FUEL EXPIRES THE ORE SAMPLES WILL HAVE TO BE FLOWN OUT OF THE COUNTRY, POSSIBLY TO VENEZUELA OR BRAZIL, AT TWO TO THREE TIMES THE CURRENT COST, PLUS TRANSPORTATION.

4. THE REACTOR IS ALSO BEING USED TO RADIATE GOLD FOR PETROLEUM EXPLORATION AND HYDRO-ELECTRICAL REPAIRS. WHEN THE FUEL EXPIRES COLOMBIA WILL HAVE TO IMPORT RADIOACTIVE GOLD AT MUCH GREATER COST AND IAN WILL LOSE ANOTHER SOURCE OF REVENUE. ANOTHER IAN PROGRAM AND INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITY OF SIGNIFICANCE TO THE COUNTRY IS THE USE OF RADIATED PHOSPHOROUS FERTILIZERS IN AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH ON FERTILIZER APPLICATION
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 03741 251748Z

OPTIMIZATION. THIS PROGRAM IS OF GREAT POTENTIAL BENEFIT TO THE COUNTRY. OF COURSE, THE TRAINING PROGRAMS WITH COLOMBIAN UNIVERSITIES WILL ALSO BE SERIOUSLY IMPAIRED WHEN THE NUCLEAR PROGRAM COMES TO AN END.

5. THE PRESENT DIRECTOR OF IAN, A YOUNG, U.S. EDUCATED NUCLEAR ENGINEER, IS WHOLLY U.S. ORIENTED AND IT IS IN OUR INTEREST THAT HE CONTINUE AS DIRECTOR OF IAN. HOWEVER, AS A BRIGHT YOUNG NUCLEAR ENGINEER HE MAY NOT CHOOSE TO REMAIN FOR LONG AS DIRECTOR OF A NON PROGRAM. IF WE ARE UNABLE TO NEGOTIATE A NEW NUCLEAR AGREEMENT RAPIDLY THE COLOMBIAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM COULD BEGIN TO VEER IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION: FIRST, BY EXPANDING NUCLEAR RELATIONS WITH VENEZUELA OR BRAZIL BECAUSE OF THE NEED TO RADIATE VARIOUS MATERIALS; SECOND, WITH A LONG DELAY IN BEGINNING NEGOTIATIONS WE MAY NOT HAVE DR. VILLARREAL WITH WHOM TO NEGOTIATE OR WE MAY HAVE TO NEGOTIATE WITH A HIGHLY FRUSTRATED DR. VILLARREAL; AND, FINALLY, THE ONLY OTHER SOURCE FOR ENRICHED URANIUM PRESENTLY IS THE SOVIET UNION. IN OTHER WORDS, DELAY IN NEGOTIATION CREATES A SITUATION OF GREAT UNCER-

TAINTY. THE PROBABILITY OF A NEGATIVE SCENARIO IS PERHAPS NOT
LARGE, BUT IN THIS FIELD WE IMAGINE NEAR ZERO PROBABILITIES
ARE DESIRABLE.

6. THE COLOMBIAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM IS INCIPIENT AND WE FEAR THAT
IT MAY BE EASY FOR THE U.S. TO NEGOTIATE WITH MORE IMPORTANT
COUNTRIES PRIOR TO COLOMBIA. BUT IT IS PRECISELY THE INCIPIENT
STAGE OF COLOMBIA'S NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT THAT ENABLES THE U.S. TO
ASSURE DESIRABLE DIRECTIONS IN COLOMBIAN NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT
AND WHICH WOULD MAKE IT LESS COSTLY FOR COLOMBIA TO CHANGE
DIRECTIONS SHOULD WE MAKE THAT A REASONABLE ALTERNATIVE.

7. HENCE, THE EMBASSY WANTS TO ONCE AGAIN EMPHASIZE THE
BENEFITS TO THE U.S. OF PUTTING COLOMBIA AT THE HEAD OF THE
LINE, AS WAS DISCUSSED BY PHONE DURING THE SAFEGUARDS
NEGOTIATIONS, AND TO REMIND WASHINGTON OF ITS VERBAL COMMITMENT
TO MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO HOLD EARLY NEGOTIATIONS FOR A NEW
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 BOGOTA 03741 251748Z

BILATERAL WITH COLOMBIA.
DREXLER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NUCLEAR AGREEMENTS, NEGOTIATIONS, NUCLEAR COOPERATION PROGRAMS, NUCLEAR FUELS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 25-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BOGOTA03741
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770144-0302
Format: TEL
From: BOGOTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770424/aaaaaumo.tel
Line Count: 141
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a3de16a0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION OES
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 STATE 65539
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29-Sep-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2710126
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BILATERAL NUCLEAR AGREEMENT AND COLOMBIAN NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT
TAGS: ENRG, TECH, PARM, CO, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a3de16a0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009